



REBUILD IOWA OFFICE (RIO) LEGISLATIVE WEEKLY

MARCH 4, 2010

AN ELECTRONIC COPY OF THIS ISSUE AS WELL AS
PREVIOUS ISSUES CAN BE FOUND AT:
www.rio.iowa.gov/news/legislative_weekly/index.html

RIO MISSION:

The Rebuild Iowa Office will lead the State of Iowa's efforts to rebuild safer, stronger and smarter in the wake of the 2008 severe storms and catastrophic flooding.

RIO VISION:

We envision a resilient Iowa that will be safe, sustainable and economically strong for its people, reaffirming its ties to the land, rivers, environment and rich cultural history.

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MARCH IS DECLARED "FLOOD AWARENESS MONTH"

At a press conference today, Governor Chet Culver proclaimed March Flood Awareness Month, kicking off a month-long public information campaign to educate Iowans about flood insurance, disaster precautions and other safety facts. Flood awareness is particularly important since Iowa is still recovering from the floods and storms of 2008. The 2008 disaster was not only the worst natural disaster to strike the state, but is considered one of the largest disasters on record in U.S. history.

"What happened in 2008 has made us all aware of the need to be prepared," said Governor Culver. "We want all Iowans to understand what resources are available to minimize loss should another flood event occur. It is especially important for Iowans to be aware of whether they live in or near a flood plain, and discuss flood preparations with their families."

Throughout March, the Rebuild Iowa Office, the Iowa Insurance Division, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division will share flood-related information and safety tips with the media and the public.

"It is important for all of these agencies to come together for this partnership," said Rebuild Iowa Office Executive Director Lt. General Ron Dardis. "This month is meant to be so much more than a reminder of the disasters we've endured in the past. It is a call to action that we



Gov. Culver declares March "Flood Awareness Month" with representatives from Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division, Iowa Insurance Division, Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the Rebuild Iowa Office.

must be prepared for when, not if, the next disaster strikes."

Officials also want to make sure Iowans are aware of the availability of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). This is particularly important to consider in March as Iowa's snow begins to melt. Unlike homeowner's insurance, there is a 30-day waiting period before flood insurance begins once a person purchases a policy. According to the NFIP, a home located in a flood plain has a seven times greater risk of having a flood than a fire.

People may purchase flood insurance for a home or business, regardless of whether the property is in a flood plain as long as the community is participating in

the National Flood Insurance Program. Iowans can find out whether a particular community is enrolled in the program by visiting the Rebuild Iowa Office's Web site at www.rio.iowa.gov.

Another helpful Web site for Iowans to refer to is www.FloodSmart.gov. Homeowners, renters and small business owners can estimate their premiums and calculate their flood insurance rate. There are currently more than 15,360 flood insurance policies in Iowa.

Iowans can learn more about flood safety tips and how to create a family emergency plan at www.bereadyiowa.org.

NEW BOOK HIGHLIGHTS SCIENTIFIC PERSPECTIVES ON 2008 FLOODS

A new book which examines the floods of 2008 suggests Iowans need to learn to live with increased precipitation and resulting floods.

The book, "A Watershed Year: Anatomy of the Iowa Floods of 2008," is edited by ecologist Cornelia "Connie" Mutel, a historian and archivist at the University of Iowa College of Engineering.

Mutel solicited essays by physical and environmental scientists, hydrologists, economists, public policy experts, engineers and community managers that describe the floods in 2008, discuss what can be learned from the experience and describe how to mitigate future flooding.

The book considers why the 2008 floods happened, and makes the point that Iowans should not just go back to "business as usual," but rather learn lessons from the

disaster and how to better live with the fact that there will be floods, Mutel said. She writes in the book's epilogue, "Living with floods involves two broad activities: better managing the risks and taking steps to reduce our vulnerability, and better managing the landscape to reduce the magnitude and destructive power of floods."

Mutel noted, "This book was written to help the general public better understand flooding in Iowa. While it should be accessible to the average reader, some chapters are more technical than others."

The concepts in the book will be discussed during a flood symposium on Tuesday, March 9, hosted by the University of Iowa's Center for Global & Regional Environmental Research. Entitled "A

Watershed Year: Anatomy of the Iowa Floods of 2008; Lessons Learned – Preparing for the Future," the symposium will feature experts in flood-related fields, a book signing and a panel discussion about how Iowa is preparing for the future. The event, at which the book will be available, will take place at the Iowa State Historical Building, 600 E. Locust St. in Des Moines, from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

For more information about the book, published by the University of Iowa Press, visit <http://uiopress.uiowa.edu/books/2010-spring/mutel-water.htm>.

For more information about the symposium, contact Joe Bolkcom at joe-bolkcom@uiowa.edu.



"A Watershed Year: Anatomy of the Iowa Floods of 2008" Lessons Learned – Preparing for the Future Symposium

Tuesday, March 9, 2010
6:30 - 8:00 P.M.

Iowa State Historical Building
Des Moines, Iowa

Agenda:

Welcome:

About the book:

Trends in Iowa precipitation:

Trends in Iowa water run-off:

Iowa Flood Center:

Cedar Falls flood plain initiative:

State policy recommendations:

Panel with audience Q and A

Refreshments and book signing

Jerry Schnoor, Co-director, UI Center for Global and Regional Environmental Research; Chairman, Iowa Climate Change Advisory Council

Connie Mutel, Editor of "A Watershed Year: Anatomy of the Iowa Floods of 2008"

Gene Takle, Director, Climate Change Initiative; Prof. of Atmospheric Science,

Prof. of Agricultural Meteorology, Department of Agronomy, Iowa State University

Richard Cruse, Prof. of Agronomy, Iowa State University; Director, Iowa Water Center

Witold Krajewski, Director, Iowa Flood Center, University of Iowa

Kamyar Enshayan, Cedar Falls City Council

Lieutenant General Ron Dardis, Executive Director, Rebuild Iowa Office

For more details about the book: <http://uiopress.uiowa.edu/books/2010-spring/mutel-water.htm>

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